

*Post* 11-24-68  
**Cyclist Is Given  
Death Sentence  
In Slaying of 2**

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Nov. 23 (UPI)—John Lee Sommerhalder, 24, one-time head of the Grim Reapers motorcycle gang, Friday was sentenced to death in the San Quentin gas chamber for the murder of a Santa Venetia couple last January.

Superior Court Judge Samuel W. Gardiner, in passing sentence, said "if there ever was a case in California justifying the death penalty, this is it."

Sommerhalder and another member of the motorcycle club, Kenneth Preston, 20, were convicted in separate trials of the murders of Curtis and Shirley Ackley, both 35. Ackley was shot four times in the head. His wife was raped, stabbed, strangled and shot.

Preston, convicted in June, was also given the death penalty.

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